

## President's Report to the Board

For the period from July 3 – August 27, 2013

*Submitted to the Board of Governors*

*Submitted by Vianne Timmons, President and Vice-Chancellor*

This report summarizes my progress to date on the six key areas of priority related to the Strategic Plan which the Board and I have identified for 2013-2014. It also includes an update on my own academic research program, as well as an overview of University highlights since the beginning of this reporting period.

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### **OUR WORK: Teaching, Research and Public Service**

**Objective: make the University widely known for its quality of work by promoting and rewarding the pursuit of excellence in teaching, research, public service and administration**

- Demonstrating the University of Regina's value to its stakeholders through the quality of our work and the efficiency of our operations is a key priority for the year. Over the last reporting period, great deal of work has taken place:
- The Annual Report has been completed, and as part of that process, the University received a clean audit opinion on its financial statements. It is anticipated that the report will be published shortly, pending some final discussion currently taking place between the Provincial Auditor's Office and Treasury Board.
- It is also of note that the University has received its third consecutive annual letter from the Provincial Auditor that contained zero management points. This is a strong indication of the soundness of our financial policies and oversight.
- The University continued work to address and implement the 26 recommendations contained in the Provincial Auditor's report on research-related policies and processes. A Task Force has been created to oversee this process, with the mandate of working to update existing policies and develop new ones as required, develop and review strategies for implementation, and plan for communication about policies and ensuring compliance for the future.
- The Task Force has met three times to plan its activities and timelines for the next several months. Each of the 26 recommendations has a project leader, and the Task Force will meet at least monthly during the overall 18-month timeframe.
- In a related and complementary process, Dr. Martha Crago of Dalhousie University and Dr. Martin Kirk of the University of British Columbia will be on

campus in mid-September to do their assessment of research policies and provide a report with an outside perspective that will help the Task Force in its work.

- Regarding the ongoing policy of renewing the University's set of policies in other areas, information and decision items have been included in the Board package for consideration.
- The July/August reporting period was a very active one in terms of the University's research enterprise. A total of \$1.9 million in funding was awarded to the University from external sources, consisting of approximately \$0.8 million from grants, and approximately \$1.1 million in contracts.
- This funding includes Enterprise Saskatchewan's support for the Institute of Energy, Environment and Sustainable Communities in the area of amine-based CO<sub>2</sub> capture systems, CIHR support of Dr. Mohan Babu's mitochondrial research in the Faculty of Science, and CIHR support for Gordon Amundson's Faculty of Arts research in the area of post-traumatic stress disorder.
- Discussions continued with the Government of Saskatchewan regarding how the University's existing Saskatchewan Justice Institute and Centre for Public Safety and First Responders could potentially co-ordinate their work in support of a larger provincial body dedicated to public and community safety.
- Planning continues for "Sustainability Month" activities in October to highlight different initiatives on campus in that regard.
- The University's Emergency Notification System, which was implemented earlier in the summer, has been rigorously tested over the past couple of months to ensure its effectiveness in anticipation of the busy fall semester.
- In July, Vice-President (Administration) Dave Button was recognized by the Association of Higher Educational Facilities Officers (APPA) with its Meritorious Service Award in honour of his exceptional volunteer service to the organization. This is the second time in two years that he has been recognized by the organization – a clear indication of his expertise in the area of facilities management, and of the esteem in which he is held by his colleagues.

### **Objective: align our array of program offerings to respond to the needs and interests of current and prospective students**

Work has continued in the area of ensuring that our academic program meet and anticipate the needs of our students:

- The Academic Program Review is nearing completion, and will officially conclude at the end of 2013. A final report will be distributed to the academic community, and curricular changes and unit reviews will continue to take place as part of the standard academic process.

- The next step in the implementation of the Strategic Plan on Teaching and Learning is to determine faculty-wide criteria for the recognition of excellence in teaching and to incorporate these criteria in the respective Criteria Documents. This task, initiated by members of the Teaching and Learning Advisory Group, will be facilitated in the coming weeks and months by the Deans of each line faculty.
- The Fall 2013 semester will mark the first one in which students in Swift Current will be able to complete a Saskatchewan Collaborative Bachelor of Science in Nursing program in their home community. A full cohort of 8 students will take part in the program in Swift Current, receiving instruction at Great Plains College, and ultimately completing their practicum at the Cypress Regional Hospital.
- A full cohort is also expected for the Fall 2013 launch of the new and largely online Master's Degree in Health Administration.
- Applications for the new Master of Nursing program will open in January 2014. This fully online program is now under development and will launch in September 2014.
- Also in the area of nursing education, Dean of Nursing David Gregory will be leading a September meeting to discuss the formation of a western provinces' consortium on midwifery education.
- Fall enrolments are up in online, early morning, and evening courses – an indication that the University's efforts to enhance and promote alternate times and modes of course delivery are meeting student needs.
- The Timetable Renewal Project is now approximately 75% complete. Testing and modeling are going well, and staff members are comfortable with the developing process. Work will continue to finalize the new timetabling process once the new Registrar arrives on campus, and it is anticipated that the new system will be in operation for 2014-15 as planned.
- Together with SIAST, the University is exploring a collaboration whereby students could earn a SIAST diploma and a University of Regina degree in four years. Target areas could include business administration, education, and geomatics.

## **OUR PEOPLE: Engagement, Diversity, Success, Esteem**

**Objective: foster positive and open employee relations, providing freedom and opportunity for faculty, staff and students to be recognized, heard, and positively engaged in the operations of the University**

There were some key developments in our ongoing efforts to ensure that openness, trust and a sense of positive engagement exist on campus:

- Collective agreements for both URFA-academic staff and URFA-APT members were ratified for the period covering July 1, 2011 - June 30, 2014. A ceremony was held on August 26 to formally sign the academic staff agreement, and it is anticipated that the signing of the APT agreement will take place shortly.
- Planning for the October 29 meeting of Council has continued. The Special Committee of Council responsible for updating the existing rules and regulations and managing recommendations on the committee structure of Council met in mid-July and again in late August. As well, the call for agenda items will go out shortly, and student by-elections will be held in September to determine student representatives for 2013-2014.

**Objective: ensure that we recruit, retain and foster the success of a growing and diverse student body**

There are a number of items to report with regard to this key objective:

- Recently compiled statistics show that between Fall 2009 and Fall 2012, the number of students accessing the services of the Centre for Student Accessibility each year has increased from 270 to almost 400 – an indication that the University is providing disability and other related services that are relevant to our increasingly diverse student body.
- Although they are preliminary at this point, Fall 2013 enrolment numbers are promising. Year-over-year undergraduate enrolments across the entire campus were up 3.2% as of August 20. The number of graduate students registered is stable, with a decline of only 0.3%, or 4 students. As a result, the total number of students registered at this point is up 2.8% over last year, putting the University on track for another record enrolment.
- The University continues to attract an increasing number of applicants from outside the immediate Regina area. Applications from outside Regina but within Saskatchewan have increased by 3%, applications from the Calgary area are up more than 200%, and applications from elsewhere in Alberta are up 45% compared to the same time last year. In addition, international enrolments were up by 13% as of early August, despite the fact that visa processing delays at the

federal level mean that some international students are deferring entry until January 2014.

- It is also of note that the number of credit hours in which students are registered has increased even more so, and is up 4.1% over Fall 2012.
- It is anticipated that the UR Guarantee program will have approximately 1,200 participating students for the Fall 2013 semester.
- UR International and the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research have been planning new ways to work together to recruit international graduate students, particularly in countries such as Saudia Arabia, Brazil and Mexico.
- Late August has seen the beginning of many orientation-related activities on campus, including ones geared especially for Aboriginal students. By the time the Board meeting takes place, the full suite of orientation activities will have taken place, including events for parent as well as mature and transfer students.
- Planning has continued for the University's contribution to the 2014 North American Indigenous Games, which will provide the opportunity to showcase the campus to a continent-wide audience and many prospective students.
- The University has tentatively been awarded the 2017 National Science Fair, and it is anticipated that pending final arrangements, the announcement will be made before the end of the year. This event would also provide the opportunity to showcase campus and recruit highly qualified students from both inside and outside the province.
- The deans of Business Administration, Science and Arts, together with the Johnson-Shoyama Graduate School of Public Policy, are collaborating to explore teaching and research opportunities in "big data" and data mining, which could attract graduate students to the University in an emerging area of study in the coming years.
- Dr. Shauneen Pete has been seconded to the role of Executive Lead – Indigenization for the period from July 1, 2013 until December 31, 2013. She will work with the Aboriginal Advisory Circle and lead a number of initiatives over the coming months related to indigenizing our campus.
- Student Recruitment and UR International continued with their implementation of the EZ Recruit online system designed to help them communicate better with prospective students and more easily schedule activities like campus visits and counselling sessions.
- Student Recruitment has also been planning its fall recruitment travel, and finalizing details for on-campus recruitment sessions such as the UR Update for guidance counsellors and post-secondary education co-ordinators from Saskatchewan's First Nations.

## **OUR COMMUNITIES: Presence and Partnerships**

### **Objective: promote community involvement in and support of the University**

There has been a great deal of activity over the summer months to ensure that the campus community and the larger community remain engaged with our University:

- Private funds raised for the College Avenue campus renewal project remain at the same level as in the last report – \$3.6 million, including the formal announcement of a \$250,000 contribution from Dr. Jacqui Shumiatcher. Additional support has been received through verbal commitments in recent months, however, and an emphasis remains on confirming support that is under consideration in the area of Leadership contributions (\$250,000+) and Major Gifts (\$100,000+).
- A new fundraising total will be announced on October 18, when the public awareness campaign for the renewal project is formally launched.
- The Communications and Marketing Unit is currently planning the fall 2013 Northern and Community Connections Tours. The Northern Tour is set for October 8-10 with destinations including La Ronge, Fond du Lac, Uranium City and Stony Rapids. The preliminary itinerary includes visits to schools, including NORTEP and Northlands College, and meetings with key stakeholders such as media, government, and educational and community leaders. The Community Connections Tour is scheduled for November 3-5, with visits to Lloydminster, North Battleford and Meadow Lake. On November 15, representatives from the University will also visit Swift Current to meet with local schools and key community stakeholders.
- On September 20, the ninth annual University of Regina Alumni Crowning Achievement Awards dinner will take place to celebrate the achievements of some of our most outstanding alumni.
- The President's Community Award will be presented on November 14 to Ralph Goodale, MP for Regina-Wascana, to recognize his decades of noteworthy service to the local, provincial and national communities.
- Planning is complete for the President's Breakfast for Athletics, which takes place in early September to raise funds for the University's athletics events.
- Work continues on the wayfinding and signage project, which is intended to enhance accessibility to campus for the larger community. The design was completed for the first phase, which entails new signage at the major entrances to the campus, and the project was tendered. Given that the lowest bid was higher than the budgeted amount, the project team is reducing the scope of the project so that the low bidder may re-price that portion of the project. If the revised pricing meets the budget, the contractor has indicated that the project should be completed at the end of November.

- During the summer months, the University hosted several different types of camps for elementary school-aged children, providing educational opportunities for thousands of young students in the Regina area.

**Objective: Enhance collaboration with and among First Nations University of Canada, Campion and Luther Colleges, and the Institut français**

Work has continued in this area on several fronts:

- With both the University and FNUniv continuing to fulfill their mutual obligations with respect to the Administrative Services Contract, an information related to the contract has been included in the Board package.
- The search process for a new President of FNUniv continues. A search consultant has been engaged through an RFP process.
- The Search Advisory Committee for the hiring of the Director of the Institut français is being assembled, and will hold its first meeting in September 2013. The committee will proceed in accordance with the Policy for Out-of-Scope Academic Administrative Appointments. The committee tasked with the implementation of the recommendations of the Presidential Task Force on the future of the Institut français will also begin to meet in September. The Fransaskois community will continue to be consulted in both cases.
- By the time the Board meeting takes place, the University Leadership Team will have held its annual retreat, providing an opportunity to build and renew working relationships across campus, including with the Federated Colleges.
- Luther College has now participated in the Print Optimization program. Information Services installed 9 new multi-function print devices, and Luther will be removing 23 old units. Through this process, Luther will see an estimated 23% reduction in electricity consumption and greenhouse gas emissions related to their print infrastructure.

# REPORT ON THE PRESIDENT'S ACADEMIC RESEARCH

This report outlines developments in my academic research program since the last Board report.

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## INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

- The SSHRC-CURA disability policy research project for which I am Education Team Lead continues to progress. The literature review for the appreciative study of inclusive settings in Saskatchewan is nearly complete, a graduate student is being hired to help with the project over the next semester, and I have begun hearing from schools and community organizations that are interested in participating.
- I have been asked to conduct an inclusive education workshop for teachers in the Cornerstone School Division in late September. I am currently developing that workshop.
- I continued my duties as President of the International Association for the Scientific Study of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IASSIDD). This included a great deal of work at the Board level, and attending the IASSIDD Asia Pacific Regional Conference in Tokyo, Japan.

## ACADEMIC PUBLICATIONS

- My article entitled “IASSIDD: Are We Practicing Knowledge Translation Effectively?” has now been published in the *Journal of Policy and Practice in Intellectual Disabilities*.
- The book entitled *Health Promotion for People with Intellectual Disabilities*, for which I and a colleague wrote the foreword, is still in press.
- Having previously received confirmation that my article entitled “Aboriginal Students’ Perceptions of Post-Secondary Success Initiatives” is in the final stages of publication for the *Canadian Journal of Native Studies*, I continue to await word regarding its official publication.

## ACADEMIC PRESENTATIONS

- At the IASSIDD Asia Pacific Regional Conference, I gave a keynote address based on my recently published article, “IASSIDD: Are We Practicing Knowledge Translation Effectively?”

## CELEBRATING OUR CAMPUS

This report highlights faculty, staff and student successes as well as some notable campus events since the last Board report.

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### FACULTY AND STAFF SUCCESS

- Dr. Chris Somers of the Biology department received a great deal of national attention over the past few months on his research into hybrid “saugeye” fish as well as his research on bull snakes.
- Jim Daschuk of the Faculty of Kinesiology and Health Studies continued to receive national and international accolades for his University of Regina Press book entitled *Clearing the Plains: Disease, Politics of Starvation, and the Loss of Aboriginal Life*.
- Approximately 30 faculty members participated in a two-day Summer Institute on Course (Re) Design in late August. This workshop, organized by the Centre for Teaching and Learning and featuring a number of the University’s most innovative teachers, helped participants explore new ways to develop, organize and deliver their course material.

### STUDENT SUCCESS

- Doctoral student Brandon Klug, who recently received an NSERC grant of \$35,000 per year for three years, has received public recognition for his work researching the hibernation habits of bats.
- Mathematics major Adam Dyck has received scholarships from NSERC and the Canadian Mathematical Society which will enable him to study for four months at the Independent University of Moscow.
- University of Regina Student Ambassador program leaders have been organizing a “Terry’s Cause on Campus” fundraiser for cancer research. The event will take place on September 14.
- Nicole Behr, a student in the Campus for All Program, received the Cameco Literacy learner Award, which includes a bursary of \$1,000.

### CAMPUS EVENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

- In mid-August, a “Based in Business” entrepreneurial workshop took place at the Paul J. Hill School of Business. Sponsored in part by the Prince’s Charities Canada, the program is designed to help members of the Canadian Forces transition from a military career to entrepreneurship.

- In late August, Ken Steele of the Academica Group visited campus to deliver a presentation on “The Road Ahead for Higher Ed.” Approximately 200 people attended from the University community and beyond.